

Rally Obedience –A Performance Event for Everyone!

Did you ever think about doing agility with your Dal, but then think, “No, I can’t keep up” or “I don’t want to run that much”?

Have you ruled out doing obedience with your Dal because it is too structured and not much fun?

Then maybe **Rally Obedience** is for you! Rally-O as it is called, is a blend of social and obedience skills that is challenging and enjoyable for both you and your Dal without too much physical exertion or structure. Rally-O can be the entrée to a performance career or it may simply serve as a way for you to show that your Dal is more than just a set of pretty spots. Either way Rally-O is a lot of fun at any level of competition!

In Rally-O, you and your Dal complete a circuit of stations. Each station has a sign, which tells you what skill is to be demonstrated at that station. Unlike traditional obedience, you are allowed to talk, praise, encourage, clap your hands, pat your legs, or use just about any verbal means of encouragement during your run. Multiple commands and/or signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed but you may not touch the dog or make physical corrections. Rally-O lets you demonstrate a sense of teamwork between your Dal. Perfect "heel position" is not required and the scoring is *much* more forgiving than traditional obedience.

So, what does Rally-O include? Basic attention and obedience skills like walking politely, not pulling, sitting, lying down or staying when asked are all a part of Rally-O. But remember! It doesn't have to be perfect – it just has to be fun.

Much like regular obedience, there are three levels of Rally-O. The Rally-O levels and titles offered are;

- **Novice** – where your Dal can earn a Rally Novice (**RN**) title,
- **Advanced** – where your Dal can earn a Rally Advanced (**RA**) title, and
- **Excellent** – where your Dal can earn a Rally Excellent (**RE**) title.

By qualifying in both the Advanced *and* Excellent classes at ten trials, your Dal can also earn a **Rally Advanced Excellent (RAE)** title. This is *somewhat* akin to the UDX title offered in traditional obedience, but is much less formal and a lot less demanding for both you and your Dal.

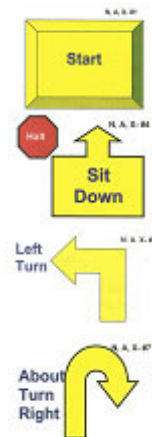
Rally-O stations include things like;

START - Indicates the beginning of the course.

HALT - Sit - Down. While heeling, the handler halts and the dog comes to a sit. The handler then commands the dog to down, followed by the command to heel forward from the down position.

Left Turn. Performed as a 90° turn to the left, as in traditional obedience.

About Turn - Right. While heeling, the team makes a 180° about turn to the handler's right.



270° Left Turn. While heeling, the team makes a 270° turn to the handler's left. 270° turns are performed as a tight circle, but not around the exercise sign.



360° Right Turn. While heeling, the team makes a 360° turn to the handler's right. 360° turns are performed as a tight circle, but not around the exercise sign.

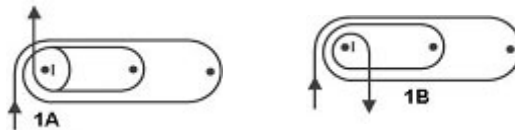


Moving Side Step Right. While heeling, the handler takes one step diagonally to the right and continues moving forward along the newly established line. The dog maintains heel position. The exercise may be performed just past the exercise sign.



Spiral Right - Dog Outside. This exercise requires three pylons or posts placed in a straight

line with spaces between them of approximately 6 - 8 feet. Spiral Right indicates the handler must turn to the right when moving around each pylon or post. This places the dog on the outside of the turns (See 1A and 1B). The exercise sign is placed near or on the first pylon or post where the spiral is started.



Serpentine Weave Once. This exercise requires four obstacles (pylons, posts or people) placed in a straight line with spaces between them of approximately 6 - 8 feet. The exercise sign is placed near or on the first obstacle where the exercise is started. Entry into the weaving pattern is with the first obstacle at the dog/handler's left side. It should be noted that in this exercise, the team does not weave back through the obstacles as they do in the Straight Figure 8.



Left About Turn. While moving with the dog in heel position, the handler makes an about turn to the left, while at the same time, the dog must move around the handler to the right and to heel position. The dog does not sit before moving forward in heel position with the handler.



HALT - Walk Around Dog. With the dog sitting in heel position, the handler commands the dog to stay, then proceeds to walk around the dog to the left, returning to heel position. The handler must pause in heel position before moving forward to the next station.



FINISH - Indicates the end of the course - timing stops.



You can find a full listing of the Rally-O rules and signs/stations at the AKC's website. The AKC Obedience and Rally rules can be downloaded as a pdf file from www.akc.org/rules/index.cfm and full listing of the signs/stations can be found at www.akc.org/events/rally/descriptions_and_signs.cfm. I hope that this has stirred your interest and that we'll see you in the Rally-O ring sometime soon!

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